

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-13 are pending in the application, with 1 and 13 being the independent claims. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 13 has been rejected as being anticipated by Mo et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,956,279 ("Mo patent"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Based on the remarks set forth below, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

The Mo patent discloses a testing circuit to cycle memory cells by providing a current to word or bit lines connected to the memory cells. The Mo patent discloses a testing circuit that provides sufficient current to drive multiple word or bit lines to exercise memory cells. The Mo patent does not disclose that different voltages are applied across adjacent word or bit lines. Nor, does the Mo patent disclose that voltages across adjacent word or bit lines will be greater than typical operational levels.

As such, the Mo patent does not disclose a test circuit that applies a voltage difference across a plurality of adjacent bitline pairs and/or wordline pairs of the SRAM array, the voltage difference being larger than an operational supply voltage for the SRAM array, to identify whether electrical shorting occurs across one or more of said plurality of adjacent bitline pairs and/or wordline pairs, as is disclosed in claim 13, as amended herein.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the Mo patent does not disclose, teach, or suggest each and every element in claim 13. A claim is anticipated only if each and every element set forth in the claim is found in a single prior art reference. MPEP § 2131. For at least the reasons stated above, claim 13 is patentable over the Mo patent. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 13.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-8 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S. C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mo et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,956,279 ("Mo patent"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Based on the remarks set forth below, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

As amended herein, claim 1 discloses applying a voltage difference across a pair of closely spaced wordlines or bitlines of one or more static random access memory (SRAM) arrays, wherein the voltage difference across the pair of closely spaced wordlines or bitlines exceeds a voltage difference that the wordlines or bitlines

would experience in normal operation. The Mo patent does not disclose, teach or suggest this element.

Furthermore, as amended herein, claim 1 discloses the step of identifying whether electrical shorting occurs across said pair of closely spaced wordlines or bitlines. The Mo patent does not disclose, teach or suggest this element either. In fact, as discussed in Applicant's previous Amendment and Reply, dated March 20, 2003, the Mo patent teaches away from the present invention by suggesting that adjacent bit and word lines will be at the same voltage level.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Mo patent does not suggest each and every element in claim 1. In fact, the Mo patent presents a method that teaches away from the present invention. For at least the reasons stated above, claim 1 is patentable over the Mo patent. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 1.

Because each dependent claim incorporates all of the elements of the independent claim from which it depends, as well as additional features, claims 2-8, which depend upon claim 1 are also patentable over the Mo patent.

The Examiner has rejected claims 9-12 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S. C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mo *et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 5,956,279 ("Mo patent") in view of McClure, U.S. Patent No. 5,619,462 ("McClure patent"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Based on the remarks set forth below, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In rejecting these claims, the Examiner has relied upon the Mo patent to support the position that claim 1 is not patentable over the Mo patent. The Examiner

relies upon the McClure patent to support the position that the step of performing step b at an elevated temperature is disclosed in the McClure patent. As shown above, claim 1 is non-obvious and patentable over the Mo patent. Moreover, the McClure patent fails to teach or suggest the above-described shortcomings of the Mo patent. Since each of claim 9-12 depends on claim 1, and because each dependent claim incorporates all of the elements of the independent claim from which it depends, as well as additional features, claims 9-12 are also patentable over the prior art of record for at least the above described reasons. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is
respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.



Donald Featherstone
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 33,876

Date: 8/22/03

1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934
(202) 371-2600